



Use of Social Media by Students of Tamale Technical University

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Abstract

The study investigates use of social media by students of Tamale Technical University in Ghana, with faculties of Business (FoB) and Applied Science and Technology (FAST) selected for a case study. The objectives of the study include; types of social media platforms used by students, reasons for the use of social media by students, the level of exposure of students to social media sites. A sample size of 280 out of a population of 934 of third year 300 students were participated, out of which 272 (97.1%) of the questionnaire were retrieved. The findings of the study revealed that the most frequent use of social media tool by students of Tamale Technical University was WhatsApp. Entertainment and up-to-date information were found to be some of the reasons Tamale Technical University Students use social media. Correspondingly, the study revealed that students spent much time on social media which could affect the amount of time they spent studying. The study recommended that restriction of social media use during classes time. It also recommended students to allocate much time for their studies and use of social media for the right purposes, particularly academics.

Keywords: Social Media (SM), Students, Tamale Technical University, Faculties, Communication Technology, information dissemination

Introduction

Modern communication technology has transformed the globe in a form of “global village.” Nonetheless, technologies like both sides of the same coin have both downsides and upsides. Technology opens up a better way for humanity to do things. In the age of communication, the Internet is currently the most important phenomenon and therefore one of the greatest influential means of information dissemination for college students. The advent of the Internet in education and the emerging communication situation will undoubtedly make a big difference in the way people spend their leisure time. To enable students to use tools on the Web effectively, they must first identify their current Internet usage habits in their free time. Student use of social networking websites and apps

is widespread. These pages are frequently visited by students as part of their regular activities. Studies have shown that tertiary students are most likely to use social networks between different range of age groups of students (Azizi et al., 2019). Traditional on-campus education systems have been used as a heritage for years to provide learning in the educational system. The key problem in the past has been the use of technology to assist academic students. Majority of tertiary students now belong to the generation of the digital age and often involved in computer technology to network with teachers and course mates to get teaching and learning materials.

Social media (SM) use is fast transforming how people connect in today’s social environment. Social media has had a huge impact on the academic

and social life of students. Scholars and educational institutions are constantly experimenting with social media techniques in order to improve serious thought, collaboration, and knowledge production. Today, higher education institutions all around the world recognize social media as a platform for students to communicate with their lecturers, peers, and other higher authority figures. Platforms for SM are popular, especially among young individuals (Perrin & Anderson, 2019). In terms of active users, Facebook remains the most popular SM platform (2.41 billion monthly active users as of the second quarter of 2020, Marengo et al., 2020). Every day, Facebook users post items that may be “Liked” by other members of their online network. This collaborative process generates a vast library of user-generated data, commonly known as “digital footprints,” which are strongly linked to users’ behavioral and psychosocial features, including personality (Marengo et al., 2020).

Apuke and Ezeah (2017) also, learned that the most often used social networking platform was Facebook. As a result, few students use this site to advance their academic careers. Unwanted remarks, images, and videos are the most common troubles you will meet, but the objective of social media was to keep linked to this global society, but it did more than that; it is for the younger generation. This is the day’s fourth meal. SM platforms are frequently utilised in the modern educational systems of Ghanaian colleges. According to (Kaplan, 2015), social media is a collection of Internet-based apps that build on the philosophical and technological roots of Web 2.0 by allowing the production and sharing of user-generated content. Social media can be thought of as an information technology platform that allows users to browse networks, trade experiences, and connect for a variety of reasons. This is a way for young and old individuals to communicate by creating, sharing, exchanging, and commenting about themselves using the different networks at their disposal. Social media has been seen by researchers as an integrated platform with various websites and application technologies.

Technological improvements have had a significant impact on university students worldwide. Furthermore, the transfer from traditional management systems has altered student attitudes and behaviors toward information retrieval and utilization. Because of the availability of laptops with the requisite hardware and software qualities, as well as faster internet connections, many college students throughout the world now have easy access to social

networking platforms. In addition, while they adjust and maintain ties to their country of origin, the host culture will embrace social media (Athukorala, 2018). In fact, social media users can read and view their online posts without having to interact directly with them. In the past, communication and free exchange of opinions between individuals was restricted due to distance, but due to nationality and religious barriers, the drift of information and knowledge continues through the new globalization of social media. Social media has assimilated into daily life in the world of today. All kinds of information are easily accessible to people via mobile phones and computers. Social media networking sites such as WhatsApp, Facebook and YouTube are becoming more and more popular among students across Ghana. People have done research works on social media across Ghana and beyond but no one has done that in Tamale Technical University. Could it be that the students cannot get the needed information from the university library or there are hidden factors that are affecting the students to depend on social media to search for information? In filling the knowledge gap on social media use preference as means for information by students of Tamale Technical University, the researcher wants to find out the level at which students of the university prefer social media use as an alternative source of information to the university library.

Purpose of the Study

The goal of this study was to identify the variables that influence Tamale Technical University students’ use of social media. The study involved views of level 300 students of faculties of Business and Applied Sciences and Technology of the Tamale Technical University.

Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Social media platforms used by students of faculties of Business (FoB) and faculty of Applied Sciences and Technology (FAST) of the Tamale Technical University.
2. To determine the reasons for the use of social media by students of faculties of Business and Applied Sciences and Technology of the Tamale Technical University.

Theoretical Framework

According to Grant and Osanloo (2014), a theoretical framework serves as a guide for research.

This is based on existing theories in related research areas that reflects the research hypothesis (Adom, Hussein & Adu-Agyem, 2018).

Background of uses and gratification theory

The approach of uses and gratifications emerged in the 1940s and experienced a rebirth in the 1970s and 1980s. In the late 1930s and early 1940s, quiz programs were popular among radio listeners, and Herzog (1940) deflected attention by simply asking, "Why are so many people interested in these kinds of shows?" Herzog challenged the usual view of powerful media effects, arguing that "different audience members might listen to a radio show for different reasons." According to Herzog's research and the findings of McQuail, Blumler, and Brown (1970), individuals listen to quiz shows for self-evaluation, social connection, thrill, and educational appeal. Grounded on the Uses and Gratification Theory, this study (U & GT). Katz first put up this hypothesis in 1959, and following research on it was done by Katz, Blumler, and Gurewitsch in 1974. (McQuail, 2017). According to UGT, viewers select media based on their individual needs and are aware of which media can satisfy those demands. In light of this, media consumers are urged to think about the advantages of interacting with the media to address their needs and solve problems (Rousseau et al., 2017).

The theory also takes into account the fact that people from different backgrounds have different media choices as well as different motivations and reasons for using social media (Junco, 2012). According to the same perspective, the U & GT is therefore suitable for application as a theory to identify the variables influencing social media use among students from varied backgrounds. According to many researchers (Al-zedjali et al., 2014), the primary variables affecting social media usage include satisfying demands for gratification in the areas of information search, entertainment, relationship maintenance, meeting new people, discussing, sharing material, and connecting. The idea aimed to provide a conceptually more comprehensive conception of audience involvement while acknowledging the potential for audience initiative and activity. Felemban and Angel Sicilia, (2016) claim that the answers to the questions "why do people use media, what motivates them, and what do they use it for?" are provided by the uses and pleasure hypothesis.

People use media for related goals, identity development, identity modification, and information. The idea acknowledges and supports the fact that

audiences use media content for a variety of reasons. Yet, the satisfaction theory addressed the findings and maintains that individuals are in charge of selecting a certain media to satisfy their wants (Katz et al., 1974). According to this, students' study habits and academic performance may be impacted by how much time they use on social media. The theory also suggests that people who use social media are not just passive users but rather they are very active in the use of these technological tools. Hence from the above expatiations on the theory, it could be deduced that users desire to satisfy their fulfillment by engaging the services of social media will let them exhibit certain factors whilst they are on the social media platform.

People use media for related goals, identity development, identity modification, and information. The idea acknowledges and supports the fact that audiences use media content for a variety of reasons. Yet, the satisfaction theory addressed the findings and maintains that individuals are in charge of selecting a certain media to satisfy their wants (Katz et al., 1974). They indicate that, students' study habits and academic performance may be impacted by the amount of time they spend on social media. Social media intrigues people because it allows them to connect with others worldwide. It offers people the chance to communicate and fulfill their fundamental wants, two crucial components of life they long for. Social media is used by people not only to fulfill their fundamental requirements but also to develop a sense of social awareness and accept their wants and choices. These days, social media allows for fast exchanges like this, but the question is how utilization and satisfaction theory handled these technological advancements. Therefore, the researcher selected the theory because it fits in the study since it asks and addresses why and how people use social media and that is exactly what the study itself is seeking to unveil among students of Tamale Technical University in Ghana. The theory in a broader sense can help the researcher to know the factors affecting social media uses of students and why they prefer social media as an alternative source of information to the University Library.

Significance of the Study

First and foremost, this research will benefit the government and its institutions. The survey results will assist the Ministry of Education to examine the impact of social media on students' academic lives, particularly in order to launch procedures to expand higher education in Ghana. Second, it will aid

policymakers in making decisions about providing high-quality education in Ghana.

Third, the institution's management will be notified of the real implications of such network sites, which will be used to inform policy decisions on quality assurance concerns concerning quality teaching and learning. It will also give the institution's management the opportunity to recognize the influence of social media use on students' educational work, as well as as a design concept, particularly to govern social media during class hours. Government and university officials will be notified of the need to make available amenities such as internet and Wi-Fi connectivity to facilitate social media usage.

Researchers and students will benefit from the study's findings as it tries to add to the current body of knowledge on student use of social media sites. Finally, students acknowledged the importance of using social media properly in order to avoid interfering with or undermining their education.

Literature Review

Social Media

Social media platforms are frequently utilised in the modern educational systems of Ghanaian colleges. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) defined social media as "a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of web 2.0 and allow the creation and exchange of user generated content." Social media can be seen of as a platform for information technology that enables the user community to browse networks, post experiences, and establish relationships for a variety of reasons (Jiao, Geo, and Yans, 2015). Several websites and application tools include social media as a tool, according to researchers. The Internet is currently the most significant source of information, but social media use among students is also growing. Students devote more time and attention to social media than to studying, despite the fact that we all know they can't do well on an exam without studying (Osharie, 2015). Also, a study by Gordon (2016) discovered that media use was linked to subpar academic performance, a negative self-image, and diminished motivation in attending college. Academic achievement has a significant impact on individual's lifetime.

In the home, at a gathering, at work, in a setting, or with peers. Excellence in scholarship is highly valued for the role it can play in people's lives, provided that life and respect are given due consideration on a global scale. Thus, society is worried about their wards

performance in education (Kyoshaba, 2009). The study also discovered that social media is altering how pupils use the English language. Students frequently duplicate the same errors during exams and draw with their pals in abbreviated handwriting, according to Obi, Bulus, Adamu, and Sala'at (2012). Students can produce, share, and exchange knowledge, concepts, ideas, pictures, and videos for online communities and other learners using social media, a computerized tool. For many years, the use of SM in the schoolrooms has been a contentious issue. The effects of SM in the classroom are a source of anxiety for many parents and teachers.

Reflexive analysis and the development of learning communities that cross institutional boundaries are made possible through social networks for instructors. The instructor's Facebook page has a wealth of material, sets high standards for motivation and emotional learning, and conveys a positive outlook on the subject matter and the instructor. Social networking also provides educators with a great platform for building their professional identities and expanding their professional relationships by exchanging ideas and discussing ideas with other colleagues. Social networking platforms supply educators with vital information and assist them in dealing with certain issues. Students may also feel better at ease approaching and interacting with friendly instructors and educators on Facebook, WhatsApp, and ResearchGate.

Social media technology is continually evolving, allowing users to gain valuable knowledge from a number of venues. According to other studies (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010), the emergence of social media is revolutionary. However, the distinctions between what is included in this phrase and other comparable associated conceptions can be ambiguous (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Several technologies have been successfully used as tools to aid students' education and learning. It is, nevertheless, difficult to classify as social media. While some technologies, such as Wikipedia, YouTube, Facebook, and some virtual environments, are referred to as social media, there is no systematic mechanism to define and classify applications, according to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010). In this study, social media is regarded as a good approach for combining online technology with educational learning in order to assist and advance science. This means that social media technologies are technology that learners consider as relevant and advantageous to educational learning. A variety of features both inside

and outside the online learning management system promote both synchronous and asynchronous student involvement.

According to Caraher and Braselman (2010), “collaboration education” and social media are used by more than half of learners to enable collaboration, real-time discourse, knowledge and data exchange. It is referred to as a tool (Caraher & Braselman, 2010). Various internet apps and social media platforms necessitate a high level of user interaction, not just between students and teachers, but also between students and material or other online applications. Social media in educational learning is a web-based system that allows interaction between students and teachers as well as among students. Online discourse is an important way of communication since individuals need to communicate with one another in a virtual world. In academia, a variety of materials should be offered to help students navigate their way to higher cognitive structures. To adapt to varied online learning settings, educational systems’ information and communication technology (ICT) must be adaptable.”Technology enables students to reach new levels of connectedness with their professors, peers, and others during a time that is incredibly demanding of our time and energy” (Caraher & Braselman, 2010). A variety of factors influence educational learning media and services, as well as client satisfaction. Suna et al. (2008) categorize these factors as follows: student, teacher, course, technology, system design, and environmental dimension.

Examples of social media use

Social media has grown in popularity, particularly among students. Furthermore, it has garnered a lot of public support (Kuppuswamy & Narayan, 2010). Social networking activities allow people to interact with others in a more socially conscious manner. It also allows people to socialize with others online while getting and exchanging information (Arquero, 2013). Students choose social media platforms because they are already familiar with the tools and settings (Arquero, 2013).

A study exploring the benefits and drawbacks of social media: Qi, (2019) conducted a study between Facebook and instant messaging. This study used a hybrid methods approach. According to the findings, the majority of students access Facebook numerous times every day. A survey conducted by Campus-Quad (2014), on the other hand, indicated that 71% of young adults have a Facebook account and that Facebook is

the most popular social media tool utilized by students. On the contrary, a study conducted by Campus-Quad (2014) found that the advent and widespread use of smart phones has had a detrimental impact on students’ visits to the Facebook website. According to the survey, students’ attention is gradually turning to activities such as instant messaging, which has been demonstrated to be more convenient and easier to use on smart phones. This has paved the way for other simpler platforms like twitter, instagram, snap chat and WhatsApp to be used by students; this in effect is causing a decline in the use of Facebook. Skype is one of the social networking sites that have several users since its advent in 2003. Skype which is an online communication tool that uses both voices over internet protocol and chat via instant messaging is an eBay company which has its headquarters in Luxembourg. Skype was founded by Niles (1995). Skype gives people the opportunity to reach one another through instant messaging and video calls. Members of Skype are offered free video calls to other members who are on Skype. This social networking site operates or works on both smart phones and computers. Students use Skype to get in touch with other friends who are also on Skype. Skype to Skype calls is free.

The availability of Skype on smart phones has made it easier and convenient for students to reach friends and family members. Students are known to use Skype to maintain their relationships with friends when face-to-face communication becomes impossible due to long distance, this helps to bridge the gap between the levels of interactions (Aoki &Downes, 2003). Twitter is also part of the networks sites used by students and majority of people around same time read messages from other users. Twitter came into being around March, 2006 and it is popularly used in North America. That is where majority of its users are commonly found (MacArthur, 2014). According to Grubb (2012), twitter usage by students has increased between the years of 2011 and 2012 and those students use this platform to spread, share and receive information from each other.

In the view of Otu (2015), twitter usage by students ensures effective interactions and efficient sharing of information. A survey study conducted by Ezumah (2013) among 289 College students between the ages of 18-28 years revealed that students prefer to use Facebook and twitter a lot in all the activities they engage themselves in, this ensures effective communication, and provision of information among them. The advent of the cyberspace which has led to

the coming of several kinds of SM sites students use daily has also witnessed the improvement in the use of the site called YouTube. YouTube is seen as one of the most visited websites today and the biggest online video streaming website. On the whole, it is believed to be the third most visited website across the globe. It is interesting to know that 60 hours of new videos are uploaded to the site on minute basis and also more than four billion videos are viewed everyday by people around the globe not living out students. YouTube receives over one billion users each month (Zeplin, 2013 Hanson and Haridakis, 2008) conducted research on the topic of YouTube users watching and sharing news. This study adopted the survey method. Results from this particular study revealed that students use YouTube to share information.

Blogs are used by majority of people around the world and has become part of online networks that fascinate users. The first blog was created by Justin Hall in 1994 and it was known as Links.net. Evan Williams and Meg Hourihan are noted for creating the platform that later became known as the blogger in 1999. Blogs saw tremendous growth in the early 2000s, middle of 2006; more than 50 million blogs were created (Sutherland, 2016). A blog refers to a "personalized webpage, kept by the author in reverse chronological diary form". It could also be referred to as a personalized webpage that is kept on the web (Anderson, 2019). Anderson (2019), states that a blog could be considered or viewed as educational social software which has the potential of giving students a social presence. Sharma (2016) also regard blogging as an opportunity for students to be able to put their experiences in a format that they can easily revisit and recount upon those experiences. Blogs help students to know one another when they visit each other's blog and read what is there. Furthermore, blogging helps in the storing and sharing of contents and also provide the platform for group interaction (Anderson, 2019). Grant (2014) also supports the view that blogs have the potential to increase social interactions among students. In the view of this, blogs can serve as the means to facilitate face-to-face interactions. WhatsApp has proved to be one of the social apps used a lot by people around the globe. It was founded in 2009 by Jan Koum and Brian Acton. One million people are known to join WhatsApp each day and 70% of these users are always active and found online everyday (Miller, 2014). It should be noted that WhatsApp is a messaging app with over 450 million monthly active users. The monthly active users of skype, twitter and

facebook when combined would not reach the total number of monthly active users on WhatsApp. It is therefore interesting to know that 65% of time spent on social networks took place on mobile devices. Mobile devices in this sense are gradually imposing itself as the computing platform for every digital social interaction (Bere, 2012).

Uses of social media

Social networking is used by students for a variety of reasons. According to Nyland (2007), five SM motives include "meeting new people, entertainment, maintaining relationships, social events, and media creation." These motives originate from the participation of university students who use social media to find new research opportunities. Hinson (2011) reported that postgraduate students at the University of Ghana utilize the Internet for social purposes such as "sending and receiving e-mails, socializing through social media (mostly Facebook), chatting, and making new friends." Another study from the University of Education, Winneba, released in 2013, revealed that students use social media to "connect with old friends and family members, find new friends, acquire or share learning materials, receive event updates, and publish information." According to Froget et al. (2013), "social media is used in organizations for marketing, organizational branding, and enhancing relationships with stakeholders." According to Tess (2013), adopting social media in higher education can improve communication effectiveness for learning activities. For example, social media can provide students with a more effective platform for engaging with friends and teachers at any time and from any location. One of the primary advantages of using social media to attain your learning objectives is peer support. Students, particularly college students, use social media in their spare time (Tess, 2013).

Methodology

The researcher adopted the survey methodology. The researcher considered survey as an appropriate method because, with it, results were generalised to affect a total population if it is sampled accordingly or appropriately. Furthermore, this method is capable of helping in the collection of information from a large group of respondents (DeFranzo, 2023). The subjects of this study included Level 300 students at Tamale Technical University. Faculty of Business (FoB) and Faculty of Applied Science and Technology (FAST) where findings were generalised, that is

934 (comprising 429 and 505 for FoB and FAST, respectively). The rationale for choosing the level 300 students was that they were the final year students and had more experience with regards to social media right from their first year. Also, they were available on campus at the time the research took place.

Purposive sampling

According to Andrews, Tierney, and Seers (2020), the concept of gathering data in research is crucial since obtained data is intended to contribute considerably to a deeper understanding of a theoretical framework. Purposive or judgmental sampling refers to the purposeful selection of a participant based on their characteristics. The purposive or judgemental technique does not require any underlying theories or a specific number of participants because the researcher decides what needs to be known and outlines how to find participants who can provide the required information through knowledge or experience (Andrews, Tierney, and Seers, 2020).

It is well known that examining information-rich examples allows the author to get insights and a thorough comprehension of the subject area. Even though purposive sampling is prone to research bias since the units depends on the researcher's subjectivities, the level 300 students were purposefully selected based on their experiences and knowledge. As a result, given the characteristics of the respondents, the purposeful or judgmental technique was most appropriate for the study, allowing the researcher to identify key participants with significant knowledge and experience preferring to yield knowledge on social media services at Tamale Technical University.

Table 1: Population

FACULTIES	Total Number of students by Programmes
Programmes under Faculty of Business (FoB)	
Accountancy	173
Marketing	82
Secretaryship and Management Studies	174
Total	429
Programmes under Faculty of Applied Science and Technology (FAST)	
Hotel, Catering, and Institutional Management	246
Information and Communication Technology	227

Statistics	20
Tourism	12
Total	505
Grand Total (FoB+FAST)	934

Table 3.2 Population by Faculties

Faculty	Number
Faculty of Business (FoB)	429
Faculty of Applied Sciences and Technology (FAST)	505
Total	934

Source; Tamale Technical University Student Handbook (2021)

Sample Size

A sample, according to Ary et al. (2014), is a subset of a population. It is the population subset that is being investigated. A sample, according to Bryman (2012), is a subset of the population. A sample must be representative enough so that the sample's conclusions can be extended to the population. Neuman (2007) indicates that a researcher needs a large sampling ratio of roughly 30% for a smaller population of less than 1000. According to Neuman (2007), for a fairly large population of roughly 1000, a reduced sample ratio of about 10% is sufficient to ensure a realistic representation of the population. Therefore, researchers chose 30% of the total population ($30/100 \times 934 = 280$) as the sample size.

Table 2: Sample Size Determination by faculties

FACULTIES	NUMBER OF STUDENTS
Faculty of Business (429)	$429/934 \times 280 = 129$
Faculty of Applied Science and Technology (505)	$505/934 \times 280 = 151$
Total (FoB+FAST)	$129 + 151 = 280$

Data Collection Procedure

A survey was used to administer questionnaire by the researcher. The researcher personally gave out the questionnaire to the participants to fill. The questionnaire was collected right after it was completed.

Questionnaire

A questionnaire was used to solicit information from participants for the study. The questionnaire was closed-ended form and was built on the objectives of the study. This was used to collect primary data from a total of 280 participants of Faculty of Business (FoB) and Faculty of Applied Science and Technology (FAST)

at Tamale Technical University. The questionnaire comprised of seven sections with at least 5 questions in each section.

Section A: Demographic characteristics of respondents
 Section B 'Social media platforms used'.
 Section C: Reasons for social media used

The questionnaire for this study sought information on factors influencing social media use among Tamale Technical University students, with a focus on the FoB and FAST. The researcher prepared the questions, which included closed-ended structured questions about the respondents' perspectives, attitudes, obstacles, and interests regarding their use of social media.. A close-ended questionnaire is a type that has multiple answers provided and the respondents were expected to tick one or as many as are relevant or applicable.

The choice of questionnaire as an instrument for the study stemmed from a number of advantages that make it suitable for data collection. Some of the strengths of a structured questionnaire as a research instrument are as follows: Questionnaire was used in this study because it is appropriate for the respondents and it facilitates the collection of large amounts of data in a relatively short period, they are easier and quicker for a respondent to answer; Respondents are more likely to answer sensitive questions as they are left alone to think through questions; Questionnaires permit adequate answers to complex issues; It is also easier to quantify and treat statistically and It also avoids biases from respondents

Pre-Testing

The pre-testing or trying out of a research instrument is referred to as pre-testing, often known as feasibility studies (Baker, 1994 cited in Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001). Pre-testing is very necessary when conducting research of this nature because it gives the researcher prior knowledge of the effectiveness of the research instrument chosen and has the potential of helping the researcher identify errors in the questionnaire before it is printed out in several copies for the actual study. For this study, a pre-test study was conducted at University for Development Studies, Tamale. A total of 50 copies of the questionnaire were conveniently distributed to students for pre-testing. The consent of the participants were sought before copies of the questions were given out to them to complete. All comments made, and errors detected

were taken into consideration and then use to modify the questions.

Data Analysis

Data was coded, entered, and analysed using SPSS software. This software was used to analyse the key variables in this study. Tables were used for simple reporting purposes and easy understanding of readers (Nie et. al, 1970).Also, responses from respondents of the two faculties (FoB and FAST) were cross-tabulated by variables that were of interest to show the existence of differences and relationships in the use of SM. The SPSS was used for the analysis of the information gathered. The researcher chose SPSS because he was more experienced with the software program in data analysis than with other data analysis tools such as Stata and Excel. The fact that the SPSS program is up to date and offers a number of new functionality and features for data analysis is one of the benefits of utilizing it. SPSS is simple to use, gives excellent data output that does not require editing, and offers assistance manuals for any issues that may arise when using the software. After electing to use the Social Science Statistics Package for the reasons stated above, the following procedure was meticulously followed while evaluating the survey results. The researcher initially compiled and cross-checked the returned questionnaires to ensure uniformity, correctness, and completeness. The completed questionnaire was then revised and sorted, and any incomplete responses were removed. Copies of the questionnaire were then serially numbered to aid in identification in the event of data entry problems. The researcher manually input the coded replies into the SPSS software for analysis.

Data Analysis & Findings

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS V22) software was used to analyze the collected data. Data acquired were analyzed under the many topics of the study's aims, and the results of the research were presented across cases.

Response Rate

The study targeted a sample of 280 participants from the two colleges of Business and Applied Science and Technology, with 272 respondents successfully completing and returning questionnaires, for a total response rate of 97.1%. (128 out of 128 = 100% for FoB; 144 out of 152 = 94.7% for FAST). The response rate was deemed adequate to represent the population addressed by the researcher. According to Mugenda

& Mugenda (2012), a percentage of respondents to questionnaires of 50% or more is sufficient. As a result, 97.1% was rated better suitable for analysis and publication of the findings.

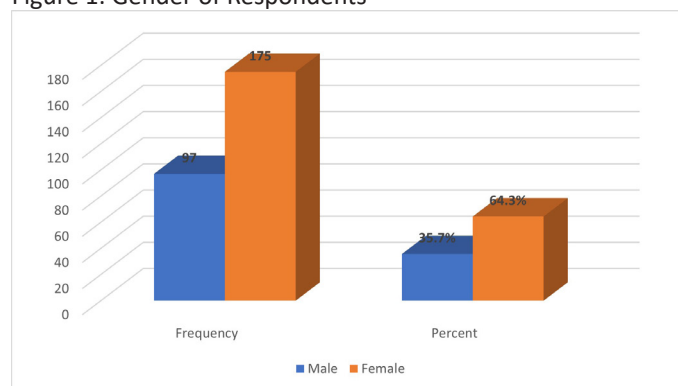
Demographics of Respondents

In this study, demographic factors, also known as participant personal characteristics, were used. Gender, age, faculties, program of study, and nationality were the factors used. The total number of participants in this study was 272. There were 128 for FoB and 152 for FAST from chosen Tamale Technical University students. This was done to allow the researcher to gather detailed information about Tamale Technical University students' use of social media services. Figure 1 depicts the findings about the age of the respondents.

Gender of Respondents

The gender of the respondents from the studied institution was captured figure 1.

Figure 1: Gender of Respondents



From Figure 1, out of the total respondents of 272, there were 97 (35.7%) males and 175 (64.3%) females among the questionnaire copies given. This means that female responses outnumbered male responders. This also gives an indication that out of the total population of two hundred and eighty respondents (280), two hundred and seventy-two (272) students made up of males and females from both faculties opted to respond to the questionnaire.

Age of Respondents

The age of the interviewees was critical to the study because it demonstrates how people respond to technology, such as social media use. Table 3 presents the statistics on the ages of the respondents.

Table 3: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age Interval	Faculty		Totals	
	FoB	FAST	No.	%
18-24	62	103	165	60.7
25-30	61	36	97	35.7
31-36	5	5 (3.5%)	10	3.7
Total	128	144	272	100 (100%)

According to Table 3, the majority of respondents, 165 (60.7%), were between the ages of 18 and 24, followed by 97 (35.7%) between the ages of 25 and 30, and 10 (3.7%) between the ages of 31 and 36. The two faculties (FoB and FAST) show that, 165 (60.7%), were age 18 and 24. It was, nevertheless, unsurprising given that this age group (18-24 years) is often the most prevalent among tertiary students. It is significant because they are the kids. This further demonstrates that universities admit a large number of students aged 18 to 24. The statistics also indicate that this age group usage of SM are more frequently on campus than the other age groups.

Table 4: Programme of study

Programme	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%) for sampling
Accountancy	51	18.8
Marketing	25	9.2
Secretaryship and Management Studies	52	19.1
Hotel, Catering and Institutional Management	74	27.2
Information and Communication Technology	60	22.1
Statistics	6	2.2
Tourism	4	1.4
Total	272	100

Table 4 indicates that, respondents for the study, 74 (27.2%) were HCIM students, 60 (22.1%) indicated ICT, 51 (18.8%) indicated Accountancy and 52 (19.1%) Secretaryship and Management Studies, 25 (9.2%) were marketing students, 6 (2.2%) indicated statistics and 4 (1.4%) indicated tourism. This means that majority of the respondents were HCIM students and this is as a results of the sample size for various programmes.

Types of Social Media Platforms

Since the arrival of the Internet, SM platforms have been created that improve interactions and connect people, regardless of geographic location. Therefore, respondents were asked to indicate a subscribed social media platform.

for the two faculties, 30 (11%) respondents rely on the campus Wi-Fi, 226 (83.1%) rely on their personal data and 16 (5.9%) used use internet cafes to access social media platforms. This implies that majority of the respondents for both faculties use their personal data to get connect to social media sites.

Table 5: Social Media Platforms Subscribed to by Respondents

Social Media Platforms	FoB		FAST		Total N=280	Total Percentage
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)		
Facebook	31	24.2	42	29.2	73	26.8%
WhatsApp	67	52.3	67	46.5	134	49.3%
Twitter	-	-	14	9.7	14	5.1%
Zoom	16	12.5	7	4.9	23	8.5%
YouTube	14	10.9	14	9.7	28	10.3%
Total	128	100.0	144	100.0	272	100.0%

From Table 5, out of the 272 respondents, 134 (49.3%) had subscribed to WhatsApp, 73 (26.8%) Also, 134 (49.3%) respondents used Facebook. The other platforms are as follows: Twitter 14 (5.1%); Zoom 23 (17.7%); and YouTube 28 (10.3%). This means that majority of the respondents have subscribe to WhatsApp has become the most popular social media application for making calls and exchanging multimedia information. Facebook was the second widely used social media platform.

Devices used by respondents to connect to social media sites

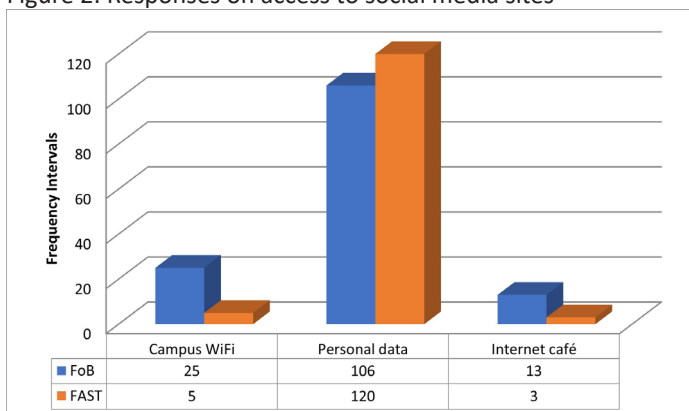
It goes without saying that SM can be accessed by an electronic devices such as a mobile phone, laptop computer, desktop computer, or others to explore social media based on this knowledge. This is illustrated in Table 6.

Social media sites access

The researcher also sought the views of respondents on how they get connected or access to social media platforms. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they rely on campus Wi-Fi, Personal data or internet cafes.

From Table 6, out of the total respondents of 272, 235(86.4%) respondents in both faculties = use smart phones to get connected to social media sites. Also, 29(10.7%) respondents indicated using laptop computers to connect to social media sites whilst 8 (2.9 %) respondents revealed that they use school computers to connect to social media. The results therefore show that respondents mostly use their phones to access social media sites.

Figure 2: Responses on access to social media sites



From Figure 4.2, out of the total respondents

From Table 7, the results across cases revealed that 190 (69.9%) respondents visit WhatsApp sites every day whilst 111 (40.8%) noted that they visit Facebook sites daily. 71(26.1%) of the respondents revealed that they visit Zoom sites daily, 60 (22.1%) revealed that they visit Twitter daily. Also, 34(12.5%) and 33(12.1%) indicated that they visit skype and Instagram respectively on daily bases.

Table 6: Electronic Device Mostly Used by Students to Access Social Media Sites

DEVICES	FoB		FAST		Total N=280	Total Percentage
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
Smart phones	108	84.4	127	88.2	235	86.4%
Laptop computers	12	9.4	17	11.8	29	10.7%
School computers	8	6.2	-	-	8	2.9%
Total	128	100	144	100	272	100%

Table 7: How frequent students use the following social media for information sharing or search?

Variables	FoB and FAST											
	Daily		Weekly		Monthly		Occasional		Never		Total N=280	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
Facebook	111	40.8	76	27.9	16	5.9	53	19.5	16	5.9	272	
Youtube	73	26.8	79	29	32	11.8	56	20.6	32	11.8	272	
Twitter	60	22.1	36	13.2	62	22.8	62	22.8	94	34.6	272	
Blogs	55	20.2	50	18.4	12	4.4	17	6.2	138	50.7	272	
WhatsApp	190	69.9	28	10.3	9	3.3	18	6.6	27	9.9	272	
Skype	34	12.5	46	16.9	29	10.7	30	11.0	133	48.9	272	
Instagram	33	12.1	89	32.7	23	8.5	49	18.0	78	28.7	272	
Zoom	71	26.1	17	6.2	38	14.0	33	12.1	113	4	272	

Table 7.1: Cross tabulation of frequency of social media sharing and devices use to browse social media

Frequency of social media for information sharing or search		Crosstabulation			
		Devices do you use to browse social media			
		Smart phone	Laptop	School computers	Total
Daily		103	8	0	111
weekly		51	17	8	76
monthly		12	4	0	16
occasionally		53	0	0	53
never		16	0	0	16
Total		235	29	8	272

Table 8: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	47.603 ^a	8	.000
Likelihood Ratio	51.867	8	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.038	1	.153
N of Valid Cases	272		

a. 7 cells (46.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .47.

The significance threshold was set at 0.05. The Chi-square value from a Chi-square distribution table at this level was 0.47 with a difference of 5. The estimated Chi-square value (47.603) is higher than the number from the Chi-Square Probabilities Table (0.47). At a significance level of 0.000, the data indicate a

substantial association between the frequency of social media site visits and the devices used to access social media. The results also show that 111 respondents from both faculties indicated that they utilize social networking sites on a daily basis.

Reasons for use of social media by Students

One of the goals of this research was to identify the characteristics that influence students' use of social media. The opinions of respondents were solicited, and the results are reported in the accompanying tables.

Table 9 To Search for Information

VARIABLES	FoB		FAST		Total N=280	Total Percentage
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
Daily	62	48.4	116	80.6	178	65.4%
Weekly	35	27.3	8	5.6	43	15.8%
Monthly	10	7.8	2	1.4	12	4.4%
Occasional	2	1.6	18	12.5	20	7.4%
Never	19	14.8	-	-	19	7.0%
Total	128	100%	144	100%	272	100%

Out of 272 participants, comprising 128 (47.1%) from FoB and 144 (52.9%) from FAST used social media for information search purposes. 178 comprising 62 (48.4%) students of FoB and 116 (80.6%) students of FAST used social media daily for information search. 43 of the respondents, including 35 (27.3%) from FoB and 8 (5.6%) from FAST used social media weekly for information search. 12 participants indicate they used SM to search for information monthly, 10 (7.8%) were FoB students and 2 (1.4%) were FAST students, while 20 respondents, including 2 (1.6%) and 18 (12.5%) from FoB and FAST respectively used social media occasionally for information search. 19 out of the total respondents of 272 have not use social media in search of information. The findings show that SM is frequently used for information search.

Table 10: Link up or Communicate with Friends

VARIABLES	FoB		FAST		Total N=280	Total Percentage
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
Daily	67	53.2	100	69.4	167	61.3%
Weekly	33	25.8	42	29.2	75	27.6%
Monthly	17	13.3	2	1.4	19	7.0%
Occasional	11	8.6	-	-	11	4.0%
Never	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	128	100%	144	100%	272	100%

Table 10 shows that, out of 272 respondents, comprising 128 (47.1%) from FoB and 144 (52.9%) from FAST used social media for communication purposes. 150 comprising 50 (39.1%) students of FoB and 100 (69.4%) students of FAST used social media daily for communication. 75 of the respondents, including 33

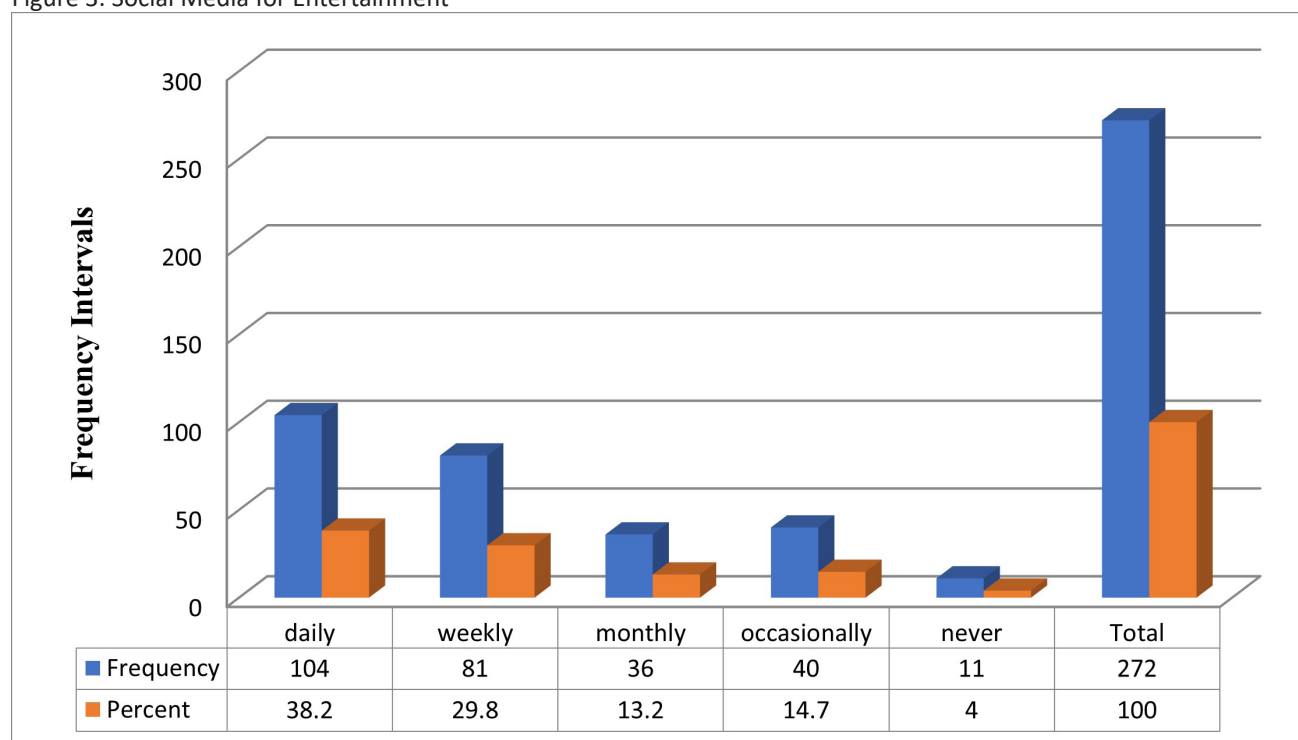
(25.8%) from FoB and 42 (29.2%) from FAST used social media weekly to communicate with friends. Both 11 (8.6%) and 17 (13.3%) of the respondents from FoB represents occasional and never respectively. This means that those students have not use social media to link up with friends. The outcome of the results therefore, shows that SM is regularly used for communication by majority of the respondents.

Table 11: To Watch Movies and Videos

VARIABLES	FoB		FAST		Total N=280	Total Percentage
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
Daily	27	21.1	24	16.7	51	18.8%
Weekly	36	28.1	61	42.4	97	35.7%
Monthly	17	13.3	9	6.2	26	9.6%
Occasional	33	25.8	31	21.5	64	23.5%
Never	15	11.7	19	13.2	34	12.5%
Total	128	100%	144	100%	272	100%

Table 11 shows that, out of 272 respondents, comprising 128 (47.1%) from FoB and 144 (52.9%) from FAST used social media for movies and videos purposes. 51 comprising 27 (18.8%) students of FoB and 24 (16.7%) students of FAST used social media daily for watching movies and videos. 97 of the respondents, including 36 (28.1%) from FoB and 61 (42.4%) from FAST used social media weekly for watching movies and videos. Out of the 26 respondents that used social media to watch movies and videos monthly, 17 (13.3%) were FoB students and 9 (6.2%) were FAST students, while 64 respondents, including 33 (25.8%) and 31 (21.5%) from FoB and FAST respectively used social media occasionally for watching movies and videos. 34 out of the total respondents of 272 never use social media for watching movies and videos which represents 15 (11.7%) and 19 (13.2%) respectively. This result indicates greater number of the participants use SM for watching movies and videos information.

Figure 3: Social Media for Entertainment



Source: Field data, 2021

From Figure 3, out of 272 respondents, comprising 128 (47.1%) from FoB and 144 (52.9%) from FAST used social media for entertainment purposes. 104 (38.2%) students of FoB and FAST used social media daily

for entertainment. 83 (29.8%) of the participants used social media weekly for entertainment. 36 (36%) participants used social media for entertainment monthly, 40 (14.7%) students use social media for entertainment occasionally, while 11(4%) respondents never used SM for entertainment.

Discussion

The results showed that out of the 272 respondents, 134 (49.3%) from the two faculties, which make up the majority of the survey, having WhatsApp subscriptions. WhatsApp has clearly emerged as the most popular social media tool for making phone calls and sharing multimedia material. Facebook was the second most popular social media network. As a result, this finding validates the findings of a study conducted at the University of Ghana and Kwame Nkrumah Science and Technology University on motivations and behaviors when utilizing social media services (Asiedu & Badu, 2018). The findings also back up prior social media study. This shows that students are becoming increasingly interested in activities like instant messaging, which are extremely quick and simple to use on cellphones (Campus Quad, 2014). According to a social media survey conducted by Yeboa and Ewurs (2014), WhatsApp messenger is popular at Ghanaian universities.

Consistent with research conducted by Mingle & Adams (2015) and confirmed by Ogaji et al. (2017) and Ahad & Lim (2014), most of the students are using WhatsApp as the most popular used social media platform, followed by Facebook and tweeters. Ahad & Lim (2014) is one of the reasons students use WhatsApp. They claim that WhatsApp offers real-time SMS or communications as an alternative to short messaging (SMS) services, including simple sharing of information and media content (audio, video files, images, location data, etc.).

The findings contradict that of Akakandelwa and Walubita (2017) who discovered that Facebook is the maximum desired and broadly used social media device through students. This contradiction will be attributed to the inflow of reasonably-priced smartphones within the marketplace on the time of the advent of WhatsApp messenger. The arrival of those reasonably-priced smartphones made it easier for college students to buy one. This has helped them to simply join and alternate messages with buddies and cherished ones. Again, according to this data, there are more female students, 175 (64.3%), with 78 (60.9%) and 97 (67.4%) for FoB and FAST, respectively, compared

to 97 (35.7%%) males, with 50 (39.1%) for FoB and 47 (32.6%) for FAST. This finding contradicts the findings of the Wickramanayake and Jika (2018) investigation in Nigeria. In Nigeria, the male student population outnumbered the female student population. This demonstrates that the majority of undergraduate respondents are female rather than male. In terms of age, several studies have found that young individuals, particularly those aged 18 to 24, are the most active users of social media networks.

The results of the analysis also showed that majority of the students depend on their network providers to get access to the internet and then subsequently get on social media sites. Thus, students depend on their mobile phone's data which is provided by their network operators to get access to social media sites. The most likely explanation for students depending so much on their network operators could be attributed to the fact that these network operators provide faster internet services as compared to the University Wi-Fi which is not stable and at times very slow. This result contradicts the work of on Market Research which revealed that majority of South African students depend on their campus Wi-Fi to connect to social media sites whilst minority of the students depend on their mobile phone's data provided by their network operators. (Safiya et al., 2015).

Electronic devices are a prerequisite for social media accessibility. It's an indispensable tool for making social media easier to use. Therefore, respondents were asked to disclose the electronics used to access social media platforms. The result showed that majority of the respondents use smartphones for social media platforms. Out of the total respondents, 235 of the respondents representing 86.4% indicated they use smartphones to access social media platforms. The other devices used by the respondents were laptops and school computers in the order of frequency as they are used to access social media. According to Wickramanayake and Jika (2018), the key devices used by students to access social media are mobile phones, laptops, and school computers. According to Qi (2019), mobile technology such as cellphones, laptops, and tablets are common in higher education institutions.

Reasons for the Use of Social Media

The level of interactivity, ease of use, and ability to browse websites are several reasons that influence a student's choice of social media platform (Akçayır, 2017). Uses and gratification theory also assumes that

students are answerable for the kind of media to meet their specific needs, which competes with other sources for satisfaction (Katz et al. 1974). The study discovered that FoB and FAST students used social media for different reasons. Students used social media for a variety of reasons, including entertainment. Because they wanted to be up to date on current events and news, they turned to current news and events. Other motives or purposes included socialization, studying, and recreation.

Conclusion

The uses and gratifications approach to social media services utilized by students drove this study. The influence of the information revolution on our generation today cannot be overstated. It facilitates successful communication and engagement among individuals, organizations, and groups of people all over the world. Technological advancements, particularly social media, are the rule of the day, acting as an antidote to the difficulties connected with prior communication and information channels. As a result, it is not surprising that a sizable fraction of the global population is active on social media. The findings of this study showed that WhatsApp has become students' preferred medium of communication. Notwithstanding this, Facebook and other social media sites are still visited regularly by students. Moreover, in as much as social media usage has its challenges and effects, the findings of this study have indicated that students get pleasure, entertainment and benefits in learning. Despite its negative consequences, the great benefits of using social media do not exclude students from practically all educational levels. Some studies claim that students' usage of social media has a negative impact on their academic performance, while others claim that it has a favorable benefit. Since Katz et al.'s (1974) use and pleasure theory argues that a person's media choices compete with other sources. Social media platforms clash with academics and student concentration. The study found that social media use was common among Tamale Technical University students. Majority of students reported spending two hours or more per day on social media.

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